

Letterkenny: Depot-level Support and Beyond

Letterkenny Army Depot (LEAD) is responsible for providing with depot-level maintenance support and “capabilities-based” worldwide logistics that is reliable, timely and cost-effective.

Originally established as an ammunition depot, Letterkenny Army Depot (LEAD) is known as the Army’s capabilities-based depot. Comprising over 18,000 acres, the depot is the largest employer in Franklin County, Pennsylvania with 3,647 employees and funnels over a quarter of a million dollars annually into the region through payroll and contracts.

The depot’s focus is to provide DoD capabilities-based logistics support to the joint warfighter that includes the full spectrum of program management, depot-level maintenance, manufacturing, sustainment, field-level support of weapons systems, soldier systems, and munitions and missiles.

Letterkenny is subordinate to the U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Life Cycle Management Command, which is subordinate to the U.S. Army Material Command. The depot mentality of always being flexible, ready and relevant to each new obstacle and challenge remains the same even as the workload continues to be ever-changing. The mission is to provide the highest quality product in the most cost-effective and timely fashion. LEAD strives for a rapid turnover rate producing projects at record-breaking schedules to enhance soldier safety and contribute significantly to the warfighter.

ROUTE CLEARANCE

LEAD was recently named the Joint Depot Source of Repair Decision on the Route Clearance Vehicles (RCV). The services jointly agreed that depot maintenance will be



LEAD performs final mechanical inspection and testing on a Buffalo Category 3 RCV in Kuwait. After all inspection requirements are passed, the vehicle will go to final paint and then be returned to the customer. (Army Photo)

accomplished organically for the RCV: Buffalo/MPCV, Vehicle Mounted Mine Detection System (VMMD) also known as the “Husky,” RG-31 Medium Mine -Protected Vehicle (MMPV), Joint EOD Rapid Response Vehicle (JERRV) and Medium Mine-Protected Vehicle (MMPV) Panther at LEAD.

The Buffalo/MPCV is a mine-hunter clearance system, which provides a mine blast secure platform for soldiers engaged in the search for personnel mines and higher-rated improvised explosive devices along roadways. The MPCV clears the path for safe movement of troops, supplies and commercial traffic. The Buffalo is the key weapon in establishing confidence and stability in areas of operation.

The VMMD or “Husky” System comprises two multiple vehicles and a mine detonation trailer set that operates as a single mine detection and detonation system. The VMMD provides a blast-protected platform for the operator and detects and marks large metallic mines, and suspected large metallic explosive hazards such as AT mines and IEDs.

RG 31 MMPV provides a blast-protected platform to protect soldiers conducting route clearance missions in order to assure mobility of the force.

MMPV Panther supplies explosive hazard teams as well as explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) engineers with an ambush protected command and control platform that protects and transports soldiers supporting route clearance operations.

The JERRV's primary role is to support first responders such as Army "89D" Explosive Ordnance Disposal Specialist in neutralizing Improvised Ordnance Disposal Devices (IED), mines and other ordnance. Projects such as converting the MRAP CAT II Cougars into JERRV produce the most protective vehicles equipped with overall armor protection and a V-shaped hull.

Recently, LEAD employees were commended for successful completion of a JERRV conversion mission. Tasked by the Program Manager-Assured Mobility Systems (PM-AMS) to convert 25 Marine Corps Cougar vehicles to Army JERRV vehicles, LEAD employees completed the task in a tight turnaround timeframe. Work was commenced mid April 2010 with the last vehicle shipped from the depot on July 7, 2010, to Charleston, SC for direct shipment to warfighters in Afghanistan. Many employees sacrificed personal time with family and worked tirelessly seven days a week, 12-14 hours a day, for 60 days or more to ensure mission success.

Even though the RCV workload has just become a central part of the mission at the depot, it is not unfamiliar with maintenance on RCV. In 2007, PM-AMS requested that Letterkenny establish a Route Clearance Fleet Modernization Activity (RCFMA) in Kuwait to repair and modernize Army and Marine Corp RCVs along with selected USMC and Army MRAP assets. The mission was projected to last three years, beginning in October 2008. A 179-day rotation was implemented for 13 LEAD government staff personnel positions and the rest of the team was comprised of an estimated 300 personnel of third country nationals.

The RCFMA was managed by LEAD and operated by a contractor, VSE Corporation. Tasks included repairing the vehicles to Condition Code B or TM 10/20 standards, installing upgrades, installing modification work orders, completing de-rusting, priming and painting, restoring ballistic hull integrity, and updating vehicle records to reflect upgrades. The contractor also processed selected RCV vehicles for retrograde to CONUS.

The workload at the depot rapidly changes in order to meet the demands of the soldiers in theater. The emergence of RCV vehicles has shifted the primary focus of the depot's vehicle workload. By 2012 or 2013, the depot looks to add approximately 200 additional jobs to help complete the mission.



After final paint, this is the final result from the Cougar to JERRV conversion. It is now waiting to be sent to the customer. (Army Photo)

AIR DEFENSE AND PATRIOT

The depot got an early start in the area of air defense and missile maintenance. Since the late 1950's, Letterkenny has been actively involved in missile maintenance. Projects first began on the NIKE missile system and expanded to include executing unique Tactical Missile Maintenance Repair and Overhaul, support repair capabilities for PATRIOT Missile Air Defense System and a variety of Defense Department missile systems to include Avenger, HAWK, MLRS and TOW systems and its ground support equipment.

PATRIOT, the only combat-proven air and missile defense system in the world, is a family of integrated major components of equipment that together form a proven combat multiplier for combatant commanders from the time it was fielded in 1982. The PATRIOT is the U.S. Army's most advanced air defense system and LEAD has had major role in recapping many PATRIOT missile systems including the ground support and radar equipment. These advancements through implementing Lean initiatives and acquiring new projects continually paved the way for an exciting journey and lasting presence in air defense at LEAD.

LEAD is DoD's only organic solution for One-Stop Service for Tactical Missile Maintenance, Modification and Integration. All specialized capabilities that support Total Weapon System Maintenance are provided at the depot, including the capabilities to: store, certify, perform GSE rebuild and offer CONUS and OCONUS support to final demil. The Recap Program brings the ground support system to near zero hours/miles and applies the PAC-3 modernization program upgrades.



The primary assembly line in the maintenance facility was converted to accommodate reset of PATRIOT Prime Movers. The PATRIOT projects at the depot continue to be a prominent source of work. (Army Photo)

The fall of 2009 began a new legacy for excellence in the arena of missile and air defense with the completion of a newly constructed 40,000 square foot, \$11.6 million, Theater Readiness Monitoring Facility (TRMF). The TRMF was a result of a need to accommodate for new workload created from the BRAC 2005. The BRAC 2005 mandated that depot level missile maintenance activities at Red River Army Depot be relocated to LEAD.

May 2010 officially validated the depot with the capability to process PATRIOT missiles. Mr. Stuart O'Kraski, TRMD-LEAD BRAC IPT Lead, presented COL Cheri Provancha, LEAD Commander and Mr. David Putman, LEAD Theater Readiness Monitoring Directorate, Director, with an Operational Certification and Awards of Recognition at an Initial Operational Capacity Ceremony on June 2, 2010. The ceremony celebrated the month early roll out of its first completed PATRIOT missile. Through the collaboration of the team of Theater Readiness Monitoring Directorate personnel, Raytheon Company and ITT-CAS the complex task of installation and validation at the newly constructed facility was successfully accomplished. More HAWK and PATRIOT equipment will be relocating to LEAD, but for now all is well on schedule.

By June of 2010, COL Cheri Provancha stood before the workforce and accepted the 2010 Shingo Bronze Medallion for the PATRIOT Missile System. Milestones such as these are taking the depot to unparalleled heights of success especially in regards to air defense.

Demonstrating LEAD's flexibility, LEAD recently converted its primary assembly line of High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles (HMMWVs) to accommodate Reset of

PATRIOT Prime Movers. This new workload employed 173 people, with a workload encompassing 150 major items including Launchers, 373 Trailers, Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Trucks (HEMTT's), 900 Series 5 Ton Trucks, Family of Medium Tactical Vehicles (FMTV) and 860 Trailers.

The PATRIOT projects at the depot continue to be a prominent source of work. LEAD has responded in the past and has gained respect for producing a quality product that Soldiers can trust and rely on.

SERVING WARRIORS IN THEATER

As LEAD's employees realize the significance of their impact on the greater mission, their commitment and determination to their job becomes top priority. Often their dedication exceeds performing their daily duties and goes above and beyond expectations. While maintaining quality production is the workforce's first priority, another responsibility is to help keep spirits and morale high among those in theater.

Wanting to take their mission a step further, members of the LEAD's Special Projects Branch, Directorate of Maintenance decided to do something special for the men and women in theater to let them know they are in the thoughts of many back at home.

In four random Rhino crates going overseas they placed a letter, along with a United States flag donated by the Veterans of Foreign War in Shippensburg, PA. Their letter expressed words of gratitude, pride and support of the Warfighter and also requested the units take a photo with their Rhino and flag and send the photo to LEAD with any stories of how the Rhino might have saved troops from harm.

AHEAD

As the depot looks to the future, it faces the constant pressure and competition to prove itself as a vital and integral source of supply that is beneficial to the Joint Warfighter. To stay flexible, ready and relevant: Letterkenny has transformed its 318,000 square foot vehicle building into a flexible manufacturing floor by using Lean concepts that have eliminated almost 90% of all "monuments." The depot facilitated each work bay/cell with identical capabilities.

Depot employees can now move entire processes, equipment and workload over a weekend with no loss in production time. In some cases, an entire line can be moved and back in operation in one day.

One area of the building has seamlessly converted from PATRIOT Maintenance Vans, to initial assembly of MRAP vehicles, to welding for the Cougar to JERRV conversion to PATRIOT Launchers all within the last year.

Though infrastructure is important, the strength of the depot has been, and continues to be, the depot's workforce. Employees are multi-skilled and highly motivated. The cooperation between the union and management could not be stronger in their resolve to support the Warfighter. Letterkenny employees can see daily the impact their efforts have on the Warfighter. The focus is on cost, quality and schedule. As the winner of the Army's first Shingo award, Letterkenny employees demonstrated their commitment to continuous improvement.

Letterkenny and the Army are looking for new opportunities to grow partnership opportunities. The newest partnership on the depot is in the Air Defense Arena. Letterkenny and Raytheon have partnered to support the PATRIOT missile system. The goal is to build this partnership into a relationship that will support the growing Foreign Military Sales Program, as well as, future modernization efforts.

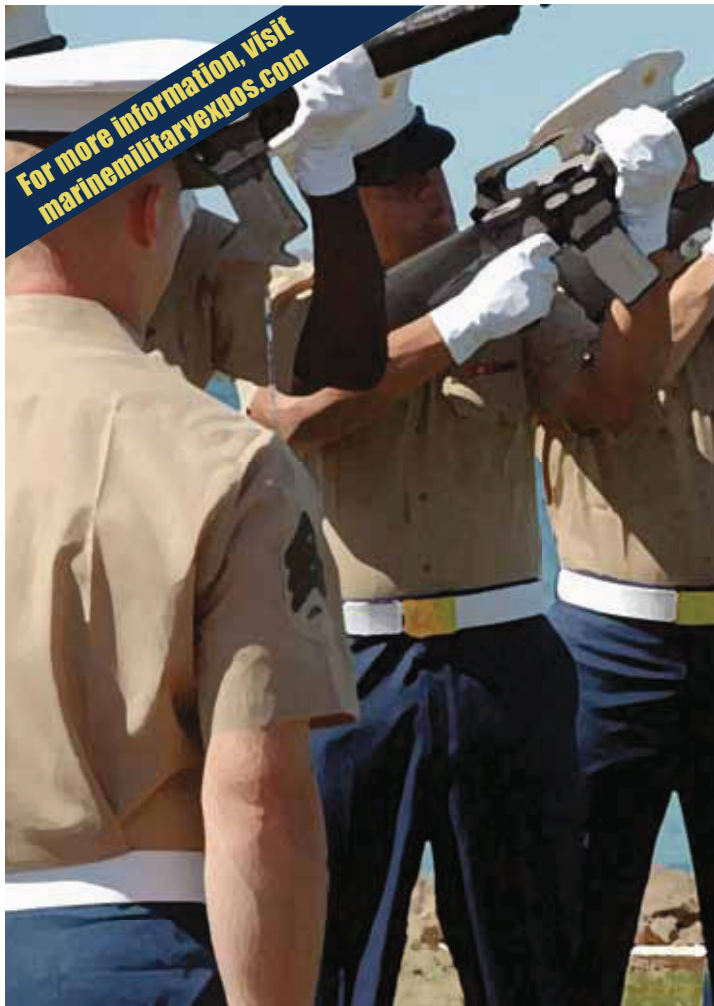
Letterkenny has evolved from the original ammunition depot into one of the premier depots in the Army. COL Cheri Provancha emphasizes the need to expand the depots relationship with private industry, "I have challenged the depot to grow our partnerships to approximately 20% of the depot workload," she said. "It takes the strengths of

private industry and the strengths of the organic depots and produces a product that has better quality, is less expensive and in many instances is delivered sooner to our fighting men and women."

Letterkenny continues to provide outstanding logistical support to our Soldiers. The men and women that work at the depot are dedicated and committed to providing the best possible support to the Armed Forces. Their hard work is recognized by the numerous awards they have received and by their continued drive to improve their processes and lower their costs. When the first shot has to count... Count on Letterkenny!

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